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Government of Madras.

Political DEPARTMENT.

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26/11/20

Fort Saint George, Political Consultation, 3rd November 1857.

No. 5. From F. B. ELTON, Esq., Magistrate of Nellore; to E. MALTBY, Esq., Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated 20th October 1857, No. 38.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th Ultimo, directing me to watch the movements of the Rajah of Soondee, and to report on his character and resources; and to furnish the following information.

2. The circumstances under which the Rajah, or Zemindar of Soondee, visited the Shorapore Rajah, were these. Some years ago the Zemindar, according to the custom of his caste, married two sisters of the Shorapore Rajah, the elder of whom only accompanied him to his own estate, and died in giving birth to a daughter, who also did not survive. The Zemindar having been treated with great personal indignity by the Rajah of Shorapore, on the occasion of his marriage, was determined not to return there to claim his second wife, and it appears that it was thought impossible for him to discover any other suitable alliance, so that although a young man, he and his dependants feared that he would not have an heir to his estate.

3. In July last year, the Joint Magistrate visited Soondee, during a tour through the Zemindary portion of his Division, and the Zemindar on that occasion informed him of the above facts, and urged him strongly to do all in his power, to obtain from the Hyderabad Resident, that the sister of the Shorapore Rajah should be sent to him, and that a visit from himself to Sholopore should not be insisted on.

4. Mr. Minchin, from whom I have received these particulars, being very favorably impressed with the appearance and manners of the Soondee Rajah, took advantage of a slight acquaintance he had formerly made with Captain Thornhill, then Officiating Resident, to bring his story to that Officer's notice, and to request his influence in his behalf.

5. After some little correspondence on the subject, Captain Thornhill informed Mr. Minchin, that the Rajah of Shorapore being of much higher rank than the Soondee Rajah, it was absolutely necessary that the latter should go in person to claim his bride, but that the English Authorities would take measures to prevent his being treated with indignity, as on the former occasion.

6. It was on this representation, and only after much hesitation, that the Soondee Rajah finally made up his mind to proceed to Shorapore in the middle of this year, when Captain Thornhill was good enough to procure for him a letter of protection from the Resident, and Mr. Taylor, the Acting Deputy Commissioner near Shorapore, was also written to, to afford him all the assistance in his power. Under such auspices, he performed his mission without difficulty or insult, and he has since expressed himself as most grateful for the share Mr. Minchin had in bringing about the accomplishment of his wishes.

7. Since I resumed charge of the District, the Joint Magistrate has, at my request, visited Soondee, and seen the Rajah, and I am glad to say that the visit has been perfectly satisfactory as regards the conduct of the latter. Some information has also been received of the facts connected with the Soondee Rajah's visit to Shorapore; it appears that his brother-in-law the Rajah received him with studied coldness, on account of his having gone there avowedly under the protection of the English Authorities, that the two brothers-in-law only met on the Soondee Rajah's arrival, or during the first few days of his visit, and on the occasion of his departure from the place, and that he brought away his wife, without receiving the accustomed presents on such an occasion, or obtaining any thing as dowry.

8. The Soondee Rajah and his Dewan assert, that the Shorapore Rajah, to the best of their belief, has not harbored any real designs against the British Government, or made any preparations with that view. They state he is a mere boy under 20 years of age, accessible indeed to bad advice, but without the means to pay for followers.

9. Finally, Mr. Minchin is convinced that the Soondee Rajah's communications with himself were made in good faith; and I see no reason to doubt his perfect loyalty to the British Government.

10. The Soondee Zemindary was for many years under Government management, and was made over to the Zemindar, the present Rajah of Soondee, in 1842, with surplus profits which accrued under

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Government management of upwards of 43,000 Rupees. The Zemindary has been assessed with a peishcush of 18,000 Rupees, being $\frac{2}{3}$ of the assets, after deducting 3,000 Rupees for the maintenance of the Zemindar's relations, to whom he bound himself to pay the monthly allowances specified in the margin. These do not lapse to him on the death of the parties, but he is bound to continue for the support of the family of the deceased, the whole or such part of the allowance as may be fixed by the Collector, with the approbation of the Board of Revenue and Government.

11. The proceeds of the estate may therefore be considered perhaps sufficient to keep the Rajah in respectable circumstances, but wholly inadequate to give him any great influence. The present Zemindar is the descendant of a collateral branch of the family, the last Zemindar having died without lineal heirs.

12. Under all the circumstances of the case, I trust the above information will be deemed sufficient, had the result of my enquiries been less satisfactory as regards the character, and loyalty of the Rajah of Soondee, I should have deemed it my duty to prosecute them further, when I might have been enabled to enter more minutely into the details of his character, conduct and connections.

(Signed) F. B. ELTON,
Magistrate.

No. 6.

ORDER THEREON, No. 929; dated 30th October 1857.
To be recorded.

Political Inquiry to cons. 3rd Nov. 1857

*From the Magistrate
Pellay*

*To the Acting Chief
Secretary to*

Government

Fort St. George

Dated 20th October

1857-

26 Recd 23 H C.

No. 929

*Reporting on the
Character and Resources
of the Choultry Zemindar*

*No. 929
To be recorded
30 October 1857*

*Pol. Inq. to Eng. 12th July
No. 13 of 1857 Para 69
Replied to 27th October
No. 1 of 158*

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